



NEWS RELEASE

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September 16, 2015

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Illinois Department Of Public Health Completes Maternal-Child Health Assessment

Analysis Indicates Need For Expanded Mental Health Services

SPRINGFIELD - Every five years the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) conducts a needs assessment of its federally-funded maternal-child health block grant (Title V) programs to inform our priorities moving forward. IDPH studies ways to strengthen existing health services, address unmet health needs, and remove barriers to care. Findings from the latest needs assessment, such as a decline in teen births and a rise in teen suicide attempts, serve as the cornerstone for the development of the state's maternal-child health priorities for the next five years.

“As we find improvements in some areas of our maternal-child health program, such as the steady decline of teen pregnancy rates over the last two decades, we are simultaneously finding other areas, to which our attention should shift,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “Mental health support for pregnant women and new mothers is one area highlighted in the needs assessment. IDPH will work with our maternal-child health stakeholders to focus more attention on support for mental health services.”

The assessment involves soliciting input from a variety of stakeholders and focus groups, as well as analyzing data and third-party evaluation of programs. The assessment resulted in 10 priorities upon which IDPH will focus:

1. Supporting expanded access to and integration of mental health services.
2. Making preventive and primary care more accessible, available, and of higher quality.
3. Eliminating disparities in maternal-child health outcomes.
4. Partnering with consumers, families and communities in decision-making.
5. Strengthening the capacity for data collection, linkage, analysis, and dissemination.
6. Supporting healthy pregnancies and improving birth outcomes.
7. Supporting expanded access to and integration of early childhood services.
8. Integration of services within patient-centered medical homes for all children.
9. Empowering adolescents to adopt healthy behaviors.
10. Assuring appropriate transition planning and services for adolescents and young adults.

As part of this process, IDPH created the Title V 2015 Needs Assessment Databook, an 80-page document highlighting a wide array of maternal-child health indicators presented by region, race/ethnicity, and other demographics, such as age. This Databook can be found on the IDPH website at <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/publications/publicationsowhil-title-v-2015-databook.pdf>.

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